

*The Address—Mr. Graftey*

If you look further for statistics, Mr. Speaker, you will see that the federal government of the United States only purchases approximately 50,000 vehicles per year. Just think what we could do in Canada if we took action, with the Canadian market representing 7 per cent to 10 per cent of the total. Again I repeat that we have the power to act here in Ottawa. We must live up to our responsibilities and bring the family car, the ordinary, everyday automobile under the rule of law, like all other vehicles.

As I proceed, Mr. Speaker, I should like to discuss with you what approach we should take to this whole general problem. During 1952, the worst year of the polio epidemic, the number of people killed by polio was less than 4 per cent of those killed in automobile accidents; yet the efforts made to combat polio exceeded by several hundred times the efforts made to reduce highway deaths. Furthermore, the efforts to reduce highway deaths continued in the same old groove. Surely if the problem was as simple as the safe driving slogans indicate, we would by now be on the way to a solution. But we are actually moving in the opposite direction.

The time is long past for the abandonment of useless and dangerous presumptions. In this age, when on an average downtown street in an average North American city on any week day an average driver has to make a decision about every 50 seconds that could result in his or someone else's death, the traditional approaches to this serious problem are obviously inadequate and it is necessary to move in new directions. A slow evolution has no value when its cost is paid daily in pain and death.

Seventy two per cent of all deaths are the result of head injuries sustained. Dr. Theodore Rasmussen, Director of the Montreal Neurological Institute of the Montreal Neurological Hospital, who replaced the famous Dr. Penfield in this Institute, said to me last year, at the International Conference on Neurology and Neurosurgery that car injuries and deaths was the major subject treated by all doctors attending this international conference. They recognize it as an epidemic of massive proportions and a problem that must be treated as such with massive public funds and massive public support.

I should like to ask, then, a few questions which we might go on to answer as we proceed in this discussion. Why, for instance, did General Motors, when it was brought to their attention before final production by the

safety engineers, permit the placing of the dangerous tail fin on Cadillac cars, which resulted in young children being killed as they drove their bicycles into the back of these stationary vehicles. What about the Corvair, when the engineering department warned the stylists that it was so suspended that it could fly out of control under certain speeds and conditions? What about the scandal of the 1953 Buick Roadmaster—and what about the Mustang?

Let me for a brief moment, Mr. Speaker, read the testimony of John Swearingen, physiologist and chief of the protection and survival laboratory at the Civil Aeromedical Research Institute, as reported in the book "Unsafe at any Speed" written by Ralph Nader who is attorney of the United States committee which deals with this problem:

Swearingen says the padding that has gone on autos in this decade has made very little difference in the safety the motorist gets. He concurs with Cornell's finding that the protection is primarily in the very low impacts; but he adds to it a more ominous finding; that "adding a padded lip to some panels has actually about doubled the hazard by using heavy reinforced channel iron to attach the pad." Other panels have a heavy brace beneath the metal which raises the "g" force to as much as one hundred. The so-called padded dash—provided only at extra cost—was offering, in some ways, pressure points far exceeding the unpadded dashboard designs.

The outcome of Swearingen's study was a specific list of design standards for the dashboard panel that will protect the knees and legs as well as the head:

1. No portion of the dashboard panel should be less than ten inches in radius of curvature. (A flat surface would be the best.)
2. The dashboard panel must be entirely covered with at least one-inch-thick, firm slow-return padding.
3. The thickness of the metal in the dashboard panel should not exceed .030 inch.
4. There should be no metal bracing within three inches of the inside surface of the panel.
5. The glove compartment door along with its rigid frame should be eliminated.
6. All knobs, controls, etc., should be eliminated from the middle and right dashboard sections.
7. Heavy instruments such as the radio, speedometer and clock must be recessed at least three inches with lightweight yokes connecting them to the instrument panel.

Why, at speeds under 35 miles an hour do doors fly open, causing people to be killed or injured? The answer is that doors are fitted with cheap locks. Why do cars roll over and the roofs cave in unnecessarily? It is because roll-over bars are not installed in automobiles.

Frank Crandall, the safety engineer of Liberty Mutual of the United States of America has said that if there is one thing he